



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
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Horses Test Positive for West Nile Virus in Two Connecticut Towns
State agriculture officials stress importance of vaccinations to protect animals

(HARTFORD, CONN.) The Connecticut Department of Agriculture announced today the first domestic animal cases of West Nile Virus (WNV) infection for 2012.

A four-year-old horse from Southbury presented on August 27 with lethargy and stumbling on its front feet. The horse developed a fever and became progressively more depressed and uncoordinated. A blood sample submitted to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) was found positive for WNV. The horse was treated by attending veterinarians and is currently recovering.

A 31-year-old horse from South Windsor was observed on August 29 by its owner to be recumbent, unable to stand, and unresponsive. The horse's condition continued to deteriorate and it was humanely euthanized by the veterinarian. A diagnostic sample was collected at the Connecticut Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory at the University of Connecticut in Storrs and was confirmed at NVSL as positive for WNV.

Both horses had no documented history of a completed WNV vaccination series and they had not traveled. A WNV vaccine for horses has been available through licensed veterinarians since 2001.

"Horse owners should review their animals' vaccination records with their veterinarians to ensure that WNV and Eastern Equine Encephalomyelitis (EEE) vaccinations are current and their horses are protected during the mosquito season," said Dr. Mary Jane Lis, state veterinarian for the Connecticut Department of Agriculture.

Nationally, as of September 4, 2012, officials in 33 states have reported 187 WNV equine cases. Horses are the domestic animals most susceptible to infection with the virus. Neurological diseases of domestic animals, such as WNV and EEE, are reportable to the state veterinarian.

For more information about WNV infections in domestic animals and birds see
<http://www.ct.gov/doag/cwp/view.asp?a=1367&q=259124&doagPNavCtr=44678#44685> and
<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/nahss/equine/wnv/>

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